Lunæ 1mo. *die Februarii*, 1691.

ORdered, That the Thanks of this House be given to the Dean of St. *Paul's*, for the Sermon Preached before this House at St. *Margaret's Westminster*, the 30*th* day of *January* last: And that he be desired to Print the same. And that Sir *Tho. Darcy*, and Mr. *Biddolph* do acquaint him therewith.

Paul Jodrell,
Cl' Dom. Com.

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12.
Ser.

A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

HONOURABLE

House of Commons,

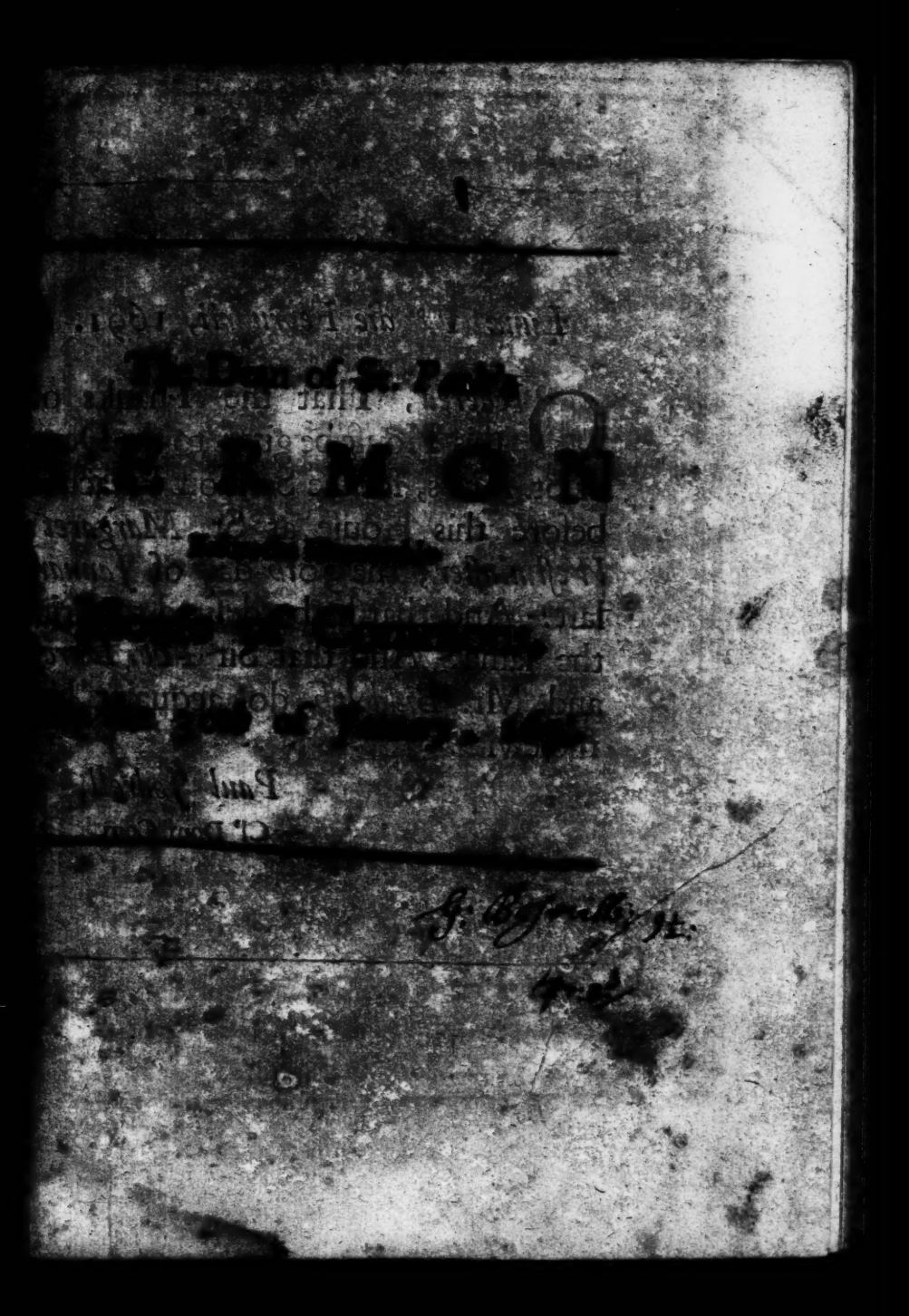
AT

St. *MARGARET's WESTMINSTER*,
January the XXXth, 169½.

By WILLIAM SHERLOCK, D. D.
Dean of St. *Paul's*, Master of the *Temple*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to Their MAJESTIES.

The Second Edition.

LONDON:
Printed for *William Rogers* at the *Sun*, over-against St. *Dunstan's* Church, in *Fleet-street*. 1692.



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On the XXXth of *January*, 169½.

XC. PSALM 15.

Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.

THIS Psalm, as the Title tells us, and as Learned Men generally agree, is a Prayer of *Moses*; penned by him, as is supposed, after God had pronounced that final Sentence against the *Israelites*, That none of that great Army, which came out of *Egypt*, from twen-

ty years old and upwards, ſhould enter into *Canaan*, but ſhould all die in the Wilderneſs, excepting *Caleb* and *Joſhua*. And therefore he complains, *We are conſumed in thy anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled; Thou haſt ſet our iniquities before Thee, our ſecret ſins in the light of thy countenance: For all our days are paſſed away in thy wrath, we ſpend our years as a tale that is told.* Which is literally true of no other period of the *Jewiſh* Church, but this, when God in great anger had condemned them all to die in the Wilderneſs: They lived then to little other purpoſe, but to paſs away the time, as men tell Stories, till forty years ſhould put an end to them all.

But in my Text, and ſome Verſes before, he prays for, and foretells a more happy ſtate of the *Jewiſh* Church; when all the Troubles they had ſuffered for ſo many years in *Egypt*, and the Wilderneſs, ſhould come to an end, and they ſhould be ſetled in a quiet poſſeſſion of the promiſed Land. *Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy ſervants. O ſatisfy us early with thy mercy, that we may rejoice, and be glad all our days. Make us*

glad

glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.

So that in my Text there are three things considerable; 1. The first is implied, That sin for which God thus punished them: For that it was for their sins, not only the Justice of the Divine Providence supposes, when the Calamity is National; but the *Psalmist* expresly affirms, v. 8. *Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.* Which intimates, that there were more sins than one, and some of them very secret ones too, for which God punished them: For so commonly it is, that a great many sins, such as we have forgot, or took little notice of, are brought to account, when some one great Provocation tempts God to publick Acts of Vengeance.

If we apply this to the Case I before mentioned, then it is very evident what this provoking sin was, viz. Their murmuring against that good Land, their rebelling against God and *Moses*, their attempt to make them a Captain to return into *Egypt*, and to stone

Caleb and *Joshua*, who encouraged them to go up, and take possession of the Land, which God had promised to their Fathers, *Num.* 14.

2. Their Punishment, The continuance and severity of it; They were to wander in the Wilderness Forty Years, and to die there, without entring into that good Land.

3. *Moses*'s Prophetick Prayer, That God would return to them in Mercy, and recompence these Sufferings, by giving them a quiet possession of the Land of Promise; *Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.*

Our case, which is the occasion of this present Solemnity, differs somewhat from this in every particular, but yet bears such an Analogy, and proportion to it, that I shall take occasion from hence to discourse to you on these Three Heads:

1. The Sin which we this day Lament.

2. The Evils and Calamities, which we have now for more than Forty Years, in some degrees or other, and sometimes very severely suffered under, as the natural effects, or just Punishments of that Sin.

3. What

3. What a happy Prospect we have of an end of all these Evils, if we can be contented to be Happy.

1. As for the First, The Sin we this Day lament; I shall make no scruple to call it what you have this Day in your Publick Prayers to Almighty God confessed it to be; *The Barbarous Murder of an Excellent Prince*: And those are guilty of base Hypocrisie, and put a great Contempt upon God, who join in the Devotions of this Day, and don't think it so.

Besides our imploring the Divine Mercy and Forgiveness, I have sometimes thought that such an Annual Solemnity as this, is due to the Memory of our murdered Prince; the least Recompence we can make to him, and yet the greatest thing we can now do for him; To celebrate his Funeral with a Religious Pomp, and to shed Penitential Tears upon his Grave; And indeed such an Honourable Presence as this, gives an illustrious Testimony to him, and vindicates his Memory from those scurrilous Reflections which are made on it by envenomed Pens.

I shall

I ſhall not diſpute the Lawfulneſs of Reſiſting the King's Authority; whether it were Lawful for the Parliament to take Arms againſt the King, to Defend the Laws and Liberties of their Countrey; for whether it were or were not, all Wiſe and Good Men muſt abominate the Villany of this Day; as we know many of thoſe did, who began the War, without being aware what the end of it would be.

For ſuppoſe (which is all that can be asked in this caſe), That in a Limited Monarchy the Eſtates of the Realm have Authority to maintain the Laws and Liberties of their Countrey, againſt the Illegal Encroachments and Uſurpations of their King; How does this juſtifie the Murder of King *Charles*?

For 1, They could pretend to no farther Right, than to keep the King within the Boundaries of Law; and when they were ſecured of this, they had nothing elſe to do, but to lay down their Arms, and return to their Duty; for he was their King ſtill, and they his Subjects; and if it were no Rebellion

lion to resist his illegal Usurpations, yet it must be Rebellion to oppose him, when he was contented to Govern by the Measures of Law; if there be any such Sin, as what men use to call Rebellion.

Especially when the Subversion of the Laws and Government, and Established Religion of the Nation is made the Condition of Peace: For tho it were Lawful for Subjects to Resist their Prince for subverting Laws, surely this don't make it Lawful for them to Murder him for observing the Laws which he is sworn to observe: And therefore whether it were Rebellion or not before, one would think it should commence Rebellion, when the *Scotch* Covenant, the Abolishing of Episcopacy and Liturgies, that is, of the Worship and Government of the Church Established by Law, were made the necessary Articles of Peace, without which, a Prince who sued for Peace, must be denied it by his own Subjects.

And yet it is much worse still, when a Prince for the sake of Peace shall make such Concessions, (tho it may be to the diminution of his

his juſt Authority) as the Eſtates of the Realm ſhall Vote Satisfactory, and yet be Perſecuted by a Prevailing Faction, who had got the Power in their hands, and did equally oppreſs both King and Subjects. I need not comment upon theſe things, you know the Truth, and the Application of them.

2*dly*, And yet it is a monſtrous Aggravation of this, when they had a yeilding and complying Prince in their hands, as far as with a ſafe Conſcience he could comply, to arraign, judge, condemn, and execute him: For what Authority had they to judge and condemn their King? How came they to be his Soveraign, and He their Subject? What Law or Rule made ſuch an Example or Preſident as this? And if they had no Authority for it, it was Murder, and that the moſt execrable Murder, the Murder of their King. It was a Sarcaſtical Queſtion of *Pilate* to the *Jews*, *Will ye crucifie your King?* This they were aſhamed of, and therefore Diſowned him, *We have no King but* Cæſar: If the murder of a private man be ſo great a crime, becauſe *in the Image of God*

God made he man; what is the Murder of a King, who is doubly Sacred, doubly the Image of God, both as a Man, and as a King, who is God's Minister and Vicegerent?

And yet a secret Stab or Poyson had been a civil way of Murdering Princes, in comparison with this Mock-Scene and Pageantry of Justice: For what a Tragical Sight was this! How could Humane Nature bear such an Indignity! To see a Crown'd Head, which not long since received the humblest Submissions of his Subjects, and had Life and Death at his disposal; who was the Fountain of all Authority and Justice, now Arraigned before his own Subjects, treated with Ignominy and Scorn, brought in Triumph through his own Palace, where he used to Shine with an Awful Majesty, and in the light of the Sun, in the sight of his own Subjects, who scarce durst bestow a secret Sigh on him; bow his Royal Head to the Murdering Axe: I cannot bear telling the Story, and were it upon any other occasion,

I should think it very unmannerly to put you to so much pain as to hear it.

And if to this we add the Character of his Person, and those Princely Vertues which adorn'd his life; such Vertues as are rarely found in meaner Persons; nay, which would have adorned even a Hermits Cell; it will aggravate the Iniquity of it: But I shall not insist on this, for he has drawn the Picture of himself in his admirable Book, better than any one else can draw it. It is an amazing Providence, That God should expose the greatest Example of Piety and Vertue, that had fate upon the *English* Throne, to such Indignities and Sufferings, as in all the Circumstances of them had no Example: What Wise Reasons God had for it, we know not; but I am sure thus much we learn, That there is a Spirit of Zeal and Faction, the Principles of which, if not restrained, will ruin the best Princes, and over-turn the best Governments in the world; for they make little difference between Princes, where they can find Pretence and Power.

This was a very great Wickedness, for which it becomes us, as we do this day, to humble our selves before God, and to implore his Mercy to pity and spare us. It is not enough to say, That we had no hand in it; that it was done before many of us were born, or before we could know and judge any thing about it, or that we did abhor and detest it when it was done: This will excuse us from all Personal Guilt; we shall not answer for it in another world, but we may suffer for it in this. National Sins bring down National Judgments, which all men will more or less feel, till they are removed by a National Repentance and Humiliation: And therefore tho we cannot confess this Sin, as our own Personal Guilt, we ought to express our Publick Abhorrence of it, to beg God to remove those Judgments which this Sin has both deserved, and has brought upon us; especially after so many *days, wherein we have been afflicted*, after so many *years, wherein we have seen evil.*

2. Which brings me to the second part of my Text, Those many Evils we have seen and felt; Those Judgments with which God has afflicted us for this Sin: For 'tis we have reason to believe, when the Punishment bears the Character of the Sin upon it, and is the natural effect and consequent of it.

I shall not give you a History of those late Tragical Times, which most of you know as well or better than I do: How much this unhappy Divided Kingdom suffered by a Bloody Unnatural War, which ruined so many Noble and Flourishing Families, made so many miserable Widows and Orphans, spent so much Christian Blood and Treasure, ruined the best Reformed Church, together with the best Prince; put the Sword into those mens hands, who knew better than to part with it, when they had it, till they had carved out their own Fortune and Greatness. I need not tell you, That the fundamental Con-

Constitution of the *English* Government was overturned, and exchanged for new Models, which did not last long enough to be lick'd into any shape; and at last dwindled and glimmer'd away in some short and faint Apparitions of Power. How the Subject was all this while oppressed by the worst sort of Oppressors, their Fellow-subjects; and found a vast deal of difference between the Government of their King with all his Faults, and their new Masters. These things, I say, I shall pass over, for thanks be to God, there is an end of them; and they remain only in Story, as Sea-marks to warn us, where the Rocks and Sands lie: but such violent Storms as these seldom end without leaving a rowling and troubled Sea. These terrible Convulsions of State, like a sharp fit of the Gout, when the pain is gone, leave a great weakness upon the Government, and make it very unquiet, and liable to frequent Relapses. As for Example:

This destroys all confidence between Prince and Subjects, leaves ill Resentments,

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Jealousies, Distrusts, which make Government uneasie and weak, when a Prince cannot trust his Subjects, nor Subjects their Prince, but they guard and fence against each other, the one to secure his Crown, the other their Liberties: An unhappy state, which must needs make all Publick Affairs move slowly, and lamely, and creates many Inconveniences to a Kingdom, both at home and abroad.

This tempts Princes to affect Arbitrary Power, when they feel their Crowns sit tottering upon their Heads, and see themselves check'd at every turn, and it may be finally stopt in the most generous Designs, to advance the Glory, Safety, Riches, and Power of their Nation; may find themselves too weak to secure their Government from Foreign Powers, or from Home-bred Factions without it.

I believe, no considering man doubts, but that the late Attempts to introduce Arbitrary Power in form of Law, were principally owing

owing to the Tragedy of this Day: And if it were possible any thing could excuse such Attempts, this would have done it. However we ought to acknowledge, that those Difficulties we so lately strugled under, and from which the good Providence of God has delivered us, were the just punishment, because the just desert, and the unavoidable effect of our Sin.

While this is the state of things, without setting up the Royal Standard, or levying Forces, Prince and Subjects (however the matter may be dissembled) are at War with each other; and how uneasy a state this is, and how much the Publick suffers by it, our late Experience will tell us, or nothing will.

Arbitrary Power and Popery were the two great Pretences to justify the War against King *Charles* I. Now whatever appearances there might be of the first through mistake and ill Councel, and the necessity of Affairs, which might misguide an Excellent Prince; there was little pretence for the second, besides a Fanatical Imputation of Popery to the Church of

of *England*, of which that Prince was so zealous a Patron; The Church of *England*, I say, the great Bulwark against Popery; whose first Reformers sealed their Testimony against Popery with their Blood; and whose many Learned Pens have defended the Protestant Cause, to the great satisfaction of all the Protestant Churches, and to the Confusion of their Popish Adversaries, and that even in the late Reign, when few other Pens durst engage in the Quarrel. But observe now, as *Adonibezeck* does, how God has requited us.

To prevent the vain Fears of Popery, Protestants take Arms against their King, barbarously murder him, and drive their Princes to seek their Bread, and to secure their Lives in Foreign Countries. There one of them learns the Religion of those Countries, which is a very convenient Religion for a Prince, who affects to be Absolute. And this brought our Fears upon us; we saw a Zealous Popish Prince, and Popish Bishops, and such bold steps made to set up Popery, as made us all tremble. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are thy judgements!*

On

On the other hand, this makes Subjects very jealous of the Power of their Prince, and ready to take all Advantages to leſſen it, which in time may proye very dangerous to Government, at leaſt will inſenſibly alter the Conſtitution: For too little Power is as fatal to Government as too much; nay, in ſome Cultures it is the moſt dangerous Extream of the two: for what we call too much Power may be well uſed, when in the Hand of a wiſe and good Prince; And then the more the Power is, the ſtronger and more flouriſhing muſt the Government and Nation be; but too little Power can never Govern well when the Government is ſo weak, that it can neither defend it ſelf nor its Subjects; and therefore the juſt Rights and Prerogatives of the Crown, and the neceſſary Powers and Authority for Government, ought to be as dear to Subjects, as their own Rights and Liberties are. It is certain Power will be ſomewhere, if the Prince looſe it, the People will get it, and when once the People gain ſuch a Power as to top their Prince, there is an end of Monarchy.

narchy. An absolute Power changes the Constitution of a Legal and Limited Monarchy into an Arbitrary Government, so a precarious depending Power, changes the Monarchy it self into a *Forreign* State. Both which Extreams wise Men, who love the *English* Government, would by all means avoid; and it is a very great mischief, when Princes or Subjects are violently Tempted to either of the Extreams: and this we owe also to the Sin of this Day.

Another very lasting and fatal Evil of such Examples, as that of this day is, that it infects Mens minds with loose Notions of Government and Obedience, which are at first invented to justifie such Actions, and which People are sooner taught then untaught. As, that all Power is radically in the People, and therefore but a trust, which a Prince must give an account of; which he may be deprived of; for the Abuse of which he may be Punished, even with Death, by his own Subjects. Nay there are some among us who charge all Men who deny this, with

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being Enemies to the Constitution, and with reproaching the Wisdom and Justice of the Nation in the late happy Revolution, which they think cannot be defended upon other Principles. But as wise Men, and as hearty Friends to the present Government, think otherwise; and I am sure it would be no Service to the Government to perswade all, who cannot own these Principles, to disown and renounce all that has been done.

But how does it appear, that the late Revolution turned upon these Principles? The Undertaking of the Prince of *Orange* was not a Gracious King, needed none of these Principles to justifie it. He was no Subject of *England*, but an Independent Prince, and so stood related to the Crown: that he was concerned to see the Succession secured, and the Government kept upon its ancient Bottom, which was thought so just and honourable and necessary an Undertaking

dertaking, that Men of all Principles seemed very well satisfied with it; even those who think the Matter carried so far that they cannot now comply with the present Government; in so much, that some, who are the greatest sufferers at present by their Non-compliance, could not be perswaded at that time to declare their abhorrence of it.

The great Body of the Nation stood still and looked on; wished well to the Prince without willing ill to the King's Person, or to the just Exercise of his Authority. And I am verily perswaded, there were very few even among those who were more active, who at that time while the King continued with us ever thought of more, then to obtain a free parliament, by whose mature Counsels, the Law might be restored to its due Course, and the Religion and Liberties of *England* secured.

But the King would not stand this Tryal, but disbands his Army, withdraws his Person,

son, without leaving any Authority behind him to administer the Government. No body ever thought that this was a perfectly free and voluntary Act, but however gone he was, and had left no body behind him to govern by his Authority; and then the Government was either dissolved, or the Power must reside in the Estates of the Realms: for if at any time there be no Power in the Nation the Government is dissolved.

The Estates upon this great Exigency of Affairs assembled, but did not pretend the Superior Authority of the People over Kings, and their Power to judge, depose, and punish them, but they only undertook to judge, what properly falls under their Cognizance in such cases, and what now lay before them, whether the Throne were vacant, and if it were, how it must be filled: And when those, who were the sole and proper Judges of this Case had once determined it, private Subjects (according to the fundamental Reasons of all Govern-

Government) were bound to acquiesce, whatever their private Opinions were, nor else such State-disputes can never be determined, but we must necessarily dissolve into Anarchy and Confusion. Where there is no determination of the Law of Nature, or of the Law of God against it (as there is none about mere legal Rights) the Resolutions of Government must determine the Consciences of private Subjects: for the Power of Judging must extend as far as the just Power of governing does.

So that (whatever disputes there may be about other Matters) the late Revolution has made no alteration at all in the Principles of Government and Obedience. It does not oblige us to own the Superior Power of the People over the King, which would be a very tottering Foundation for Monarchy, and would never support it long. Those who believed the Doctrine of Non-resistance and Passive Obedience to be a good Doctrine before may think so still, and be never the less Friends to the present Govern-

Government; and I have often thought it a wonderful Providence of God, that in an Age, wherein the strictest Loyalty, and Obedience had been so earnestly pressed on Men, so great a Revolution should be brought about, while the generality of Subjects were meerly passive, and surprized into a Deliverance. But it is quite otherwise in the present Case, the horrid Fact committed on this Day, has poysoned the very Springs and Fountains of Government, and so deeply tinctured Mens Minds, that I pray God we may not still live to see and feel the miserable Effects of it. For when Men sit loose in their Obedience, without the Restraint and Ties of Conscience, nothing but Power can keep the disjoynted and incoherent Parts of such a Government together; they are a fluid Body like the Sea, which every breath of Wind puts into a new Disturbance and Commotion.

Especially when a Nation is already divided into Parties, and Factions both in Church

Church and State, which are acted with a furious and restless Zeal, and will be satisfied with nothing less than to be uppermost? which is another Mischief our late unnatural War has left behind it. Those bitter Animosities are not yet forgot, nay they daily revive again, and our old Quarrels are acted over with a new Zeal. This is not only an unhealthful, but a very dangerous State for any Government, when there are two or three or more Parties in any Nation, which contend to be uppermost, and to oppress the others, and are resolved to dislike, and to misrepresent what the others do. When a Name shall make common Friends and common Enemies, and few Men have any regard to the Publick good, if it be against the Interest of their Party. Nay, when good Success is grievous to them, if they have not been the chief Actors in it, and they are well pleased with the greatest and most irreparable Miscarriages, if they give them any advantage over their Rivals, though the Nation is in danger to be undone by them. What difficulties does this impose upon

upon a Prince, when it is dangerous to choose any side, and yet impossible to be thought of none.

These are some of those Evils, which our own Sins and the just Judgments of God have brought upon us. And when shall we see an end of these things! When shall Peace, and Righteousness, and Truth, take up their Habitation among us! When will God return in Mercy, Heal the Breaches of our Sion, and Build up her Walls! Now is the time if ever, heartily to endeavour, heartily to Pray for this, That God would *make us glad according to the days, wherein he hath afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen Evil.*

Which is the third part of my Text, which I can but name. Now in order to this, God has done a great deal for us already, if we will do any thing for our selves. God hath advanced such Princes to the Throne (whom we beseech him long to continue, preserve, and prosper there)

as seem on purpose fitted by Nature, by Education, by Religion, by Interest, to accomplish this glorious Work. We have a King, who was always in the Interest of his Country, whose great Mind knows no greater Glory then to be a publick Benefactor, to be a Patron to the Injured and Oppressed, and to break the Chains and Fetters prepared for Europe. A King, who knows how to Govern a free People, who knows the price of Liberty, and what a value Mankind have for it. A King, who was never Personally concerned in any of our Quarrels, and therefore has no Personal Resentments, brings no Spirit of Revenge, no Spirit of a Party to the Throne with him. A King and Queen, who by Education, Principle and Interest, are professed Enemies to Popery, and the great Defence and Support of the Protestant Cause at home and abroad; who teach and encourage Piety and Vertue by Their Examples as well as Laws, and maintain and defend the Worship and Government of the Church of *England*, and at the same time endeavour to soften and temper

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Mens passions with Ease and Liberty; and God grant we may see the good effects of it; for Liberty unless wisely used, seldom proves a kindness, even to those who have it.

So that all the old Complaints are redressed, all the plausible Pretences for Faction are silenced, by the Advancement of Their Majesties to the Throne. Here is no appearing Danger of an over-growing Power, and illegal Usurpations, no oppression of the Subjects in their Just Rights, no divided Interest between Prince and People; unless People will divide from a Prince who makes their Safety, Happiness and Interest his own; nay, who purchases their Ease and Security with the endless Fatigues and Hazard of his own Sacred Person. Here are no fears of Popish designs, no pretence for former Clamours of Persecution for Conscience sake; and what have the most dissatisfied Men to complain of, but only the pressing Necessities of Affairs and such unavoidable Miscarriages, as such Necessities will always occasi-

on under the best Government in the World.

And why then should we not all unite in such Princes, and forget all former Quarrels? why should we still divide into Parties, when the Throne is of no Party, and will admit of none? what are those grievances still to make party quarrels, unless Monarchy and the Church of *England* be thought the only remaining Grievances; and I pray God I may never live to see these Grievances removed; may the Throne always support the Church, and the Church the Throne, for neither of them can long subsist apart: A fondness for Parity will soon affect the State as well as the Church, for Parity is parity still, whether in Church or State, and most of the Arguments for it will do equal Execution both ways.

To conclude: If ever we desire to see a flourishing Church and Kingdom again, let us learn Wisdom from the Example of this day; for *he being dead, yet speaketh*, and warneth

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us all to have a care of a blind Zeal and Faction, not to liſten to deſigning and diſcontented Spirits, who to gratifie their own private Paſſions and Reſentments, will Revenge themſelves upon the publick Peace; not to be impoſed on again by the glorious Names of Religion and the Cauſe of Chriſt, not to help ſuch Men to begin a Quarrel who will end it without us, and which we ſhall then in vain repent that ever we began; but theſe Cautions are needleſs in ſuch a Wiſe and Honourable Aſſembly. God grant we may all *mind the things that make for Peace, and thoſe things wherein we may edify one another.*

To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, be Honour, Glory, and Power, now and for ever. Amen.

FINIS.

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